

Hotel Morgenstern

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Category: Mortal Instruments

Genre: Humor, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Clary F., Isabelle L., Jace W., Jonathon M./Sebastian V.

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-12 01:13:57

Updated: 2016-04-18 21:08:45

Packaged: 2016-04-27 19:35:01

Rating: T

Chapters: 3

Words: 6,327

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: While Robert and Maryse Lightwood are out of town, the Lightwood children and their adopted brother, Jace Herondale, move into the Morgenstern household. Clary would normally be okay with this, but there is one little problem. She completely hates Jace. Will our favorite redhead make it an entire month without losing her mind with the combination of her brother and his sidekick?

1. Sour Surprises

Soooooo|this is my new fic. I hope that you all enjoy it!

* * *

><p>Summer is the best time of the yearâ€|especially in Alcainte. I grin at the thought as I pull open the lawn chair and sit down, pushing it back so that I was laying back with the sun completely covering all portions of exposed skin in my bathing suit. I can't help but smile as I sit my bottle of water down on the table next to me and close my eyes. This was officially the best way to start my first day offâ€|that is until the sun moves behind the cloudsâ€|wait that's impossible. The sky had been completely clear not thirty seconds ago when I closed my eyes. What had happened?<p>

I slowly open my eyes and see the cause for sudden chill on my skin. My huge brother is looming over me, with his pale eyebrow raised up in a questioning gesture. "Piss off, Jonathan," I sigh. "Can't you see that I'm more than a little busy?"

"Obviously," his deep voice replies sarcastically. "You're not busy, Clarissa. You can't be busy, because you owe me a debt, little sister."

My eyes snap open as I look up at him again, unsure of where he's going with this. "Dude," I say, "I know that you're blond and all,

but I didn't think that it was this bad." My eyes widen as I inhale deeply, and place a hand over my heart. "Unless it isn't the hair color. Have you been doing drugs? That's the only way that you could think that I'm indebted to you. I've tried to tell you that drugs aren't the answer, Jonathan!"

Jon rolls his green eyes, which are exactly identical to mineâ€"that is where all resemblance stopsâ€"and says, "Shut up, Clary, before mom and dad hear you! They already think that I'm some wayward teenager, the last thing I need is for you to confirm it for them."

"Then piss off, as I already said," I reply, closing my eyes again. There, that should end any more parts on that matter.

"I can't," Jon informs me. "You owe me big time from last semester. I saved your ass in math, and you're about to deliver a payment."

"Can we do this when I'm not tanning?" I whine.

"Clary," Jon says, "you can't tan. You'll just burn, be pissy for a week because it hurts and then you return to your natural pale self. We go through this same thing every summer! And like every summer, you're going to do it again; I'm going to make fun of you, and mom and dad are going to get on my ass for it. Can we please just skip this year?"

I look up at him again, scowling this time as I do so. The stupid prick didn't have to rub it in like that. I sigh as I push with my feet on the lawn chair so that I am sitting up again. I grab my cup of ice water from the table and take a sip out of it. Once I return it to the table, taking my time because I know that it will annoy Jon, I look back up at him and say, "What do you want from me?"

"Tolerance," Jon says.

"I already tolerate you," I snap. "I tolerate the fact that you're annoying, don't like to pick up after yourself, cocky, arrogant, and have bad choices in friends that share and amplify your horrible traits. What more can you ask for?"

"Tolerance for said friend," Jon says. "I need you to be nice to Jace."

At this comment, I stand straight up from my chair, though I do not know why I do. I come up to his elbowâ€|if I'm lucky. I don't exactly strike anyone as an intimidating figure.

"You want me to tolerate your asshole best friend," I say slowly. "We're talking about the same Jace that makes fun of my height, appearance, hobbies and drawing skills?" I question. "That is the same guy, right?"

Jon nods, slowly, looking as though he would really rather not be doing soâ€|smart boy. "Well, guess what," I snap. "You can take that notion and shove it straight up your ass! You really need to stop taking those drugs, because the very fact that you could even think about thinking to ask me that question tells me that you're not in your right mind!"

I know; I sound like a complete bitch. Don't take it the wrong way, I love my brother. We're twins and very close, but sometimes we have differences in opinions and we clash about them. Jace is the number one problem on my list, and I honestly don't know if Jon has an issue with me as of now.

"Look," Jon says quickly, putting his hands up in front of him, almost as though he is trying to placate me and protect himself at the same time. "His stepparents are going out of town for over a month, so he and his siblings are coming over here tomorrow."

It takes me a moment to realize what Jonathan has just told me. Then, it takes another moment to realize that my parents disclosed this information to Jonathan and not to me. When everything sinks in, I open my mouth to say somethingâ€|shout somethingâ€|possibly scream something, but Jon already has his hand clapped harshly over my mouth before I can say anything. "Shut up, Clary," he snaps.

I try to say "Let go of me, you insufferable idiot!" I'm pretty sure that it came out as "Eeee oh ooah me, ooh, imugherle ieho!" I know, it sounds so scary.

My eyes widen as I realize something else. Why hadn't Isabelle told me about it either? I smack his hand away, and he draws it back, looking genuinely putout about the fact that I'd hit him. I swear, my brother is such a big baby sometimes. "That traitorous bitch," I mutter as I turn away from Jon and snatch my phone off the table and immediately call Isabelle.

She answers on the second ring. I don't even give her enough time to say hello. "How could you do this to me!" I ask, uncaring of whether my brother was standing next to me confused or not.

"Jace made me swear to not tell you," she says over the phone, not even needing clarification on what I was angry about. That makes it so much worse, let me tell you.

"You listen to your brother over me?" I ask incredulously.

"Never!" Isabelle assures me quickly. "I swear that I would never choose Jace over you! I just know that he has several bits and pieces of blackmail that can be used an any time to get me in trouble. You understand that I can't let that happen, right, Clary?"

I sigh and close my eyes.

"Don't look like that, little sister," Jon says to me solemnly, as though he doesn't realize exactly how much danger he is in by being as close to me as he is. "It's not as bad as it seems. At least Isabelle will be here with you."

"Yeah," Isabelle says over the phone, apparently hearing my brother in the background, "I'll be there too."

"It's the only thing that is keeping Jonathan alive right now," I assure her. "Your Jonathan too."

"I know, Clare," Isabelle sighs. A moment later, I hear her voice from farther off. "Yes, asshole!" she snaps. "She knows! Wipe that

smirk off your face, Herondale. There's no reason to be proud of the fact that your presence is enough to piss people off." A moment later, she was speaking into the phone again. "Sorry about that; my ignorant stepbrother is being an ass."

"What else is new?" I ask her wearily.

Isabelle laughs and all I hear is Jace shouting "Hey!" indignantly in the background. I can't help the quiet snort that comes out of my own mouth.

"That sounds good on him," I say.

"I bet singing soprano will too," Isabelle informs me. "You want to find out?"

"Be my guest," I say. "Don't do it until I'm there, though. I want to witness the event that no longer allows him to procreate."

"Okay," Jon says, holding his hands up and takes a step back. "I don't know who you're talking about, though I have a feeling that it has something to do with someone named Jonathan. I will have you know that I have plans to become a father, and I want nieces and nephews, so neither option is cool."

"You'll have nieces and nephews," I say. "I'll possibly eventually have kids."

"As much as I'd love to continue speaking," Isabelle tells me, "I have to finish packing. I'll call you tonight before I go to bed. And as for your requestâ€¦no promises if he doesn't stop being an ass."

"That would require him to stop being himself," I inform her, earning a small laugh.

"That's not too much to ask," she replies. "It has to be hard to be so arrogant."

"I think that he and Jon are used to it," I confide.

"No kidding," she mutters before sighing and saying, "I'll call you later."

I say my goodbyes and we both hang up. I look up at Jon, who still looks as though he is unsure of whether to run or to just stand his ground and fight for his life and the lives of his future children.

"Quit being an idiot," I command. "Your best friend has that position for the next month. I can't deal with two of them at the same time." Just because he still looks scared, I decide to take advantage of this and take a step forward and jab a finger in his chest. "Listen up, though, buddy. I'm not happy about this, and you'd better keep Jace on a leash. I don't want to explode, and I doubt that you want me to ensure that both of you are unable to pass your genes on to the next generation."

Jon actually gulps at my threat and I can't help but allow a sinister smile to curl on my lips. It really is the best thing in the world

when your twin brother, older than you by two minutes and taller than you by over a foot, is terrified of you.

* * *

><p>Alright, welcome to my new Fic, Hotel Morgenstern! I hope that you like my idea. I was going through some serious writer's block with this, but it was sitting around my head just annoying me. Feel free to review and let me know how you feel about the fic and if I should continue at all.

2. First Day Truces

I groggily wake up the next morning, wanting nothing more than to go back to sleep. Of course, I can't because something is causing such a loud noise that it is practically shaking my bed, which is what woke me up in the first place. I groan as I roll over so that my back is flat against the mattress and bang my head into my pillows in frustration. Realizing that sleep is not even close to a possibility at this point, I just heave out a disappointed sigh and rub my closed eyes with fists, trying to get all of the sleep out of them. Before I can do much else, though, my door swings open and I hear Isabelle's voice ringing loudly in my ears.

"Why are you still in bed, Clary?" she demands, sounding genuinely offended. I crack my eyes open and peer over at her groggily. "You knew that I was going to be here today! I thought that you were going to help me move my stuff in." She has her hands on her hips as she looks at me with actual hurt in her dark eyes. Her full lower lip is jutted out slightly and as much as I want to believe that this is an act, I can't.

I open my mouth, but before my sleep-addled brain can come up with a coherent answer, Jace Herondale steps up behind his stepsister. He looks at me with a humorous light in his golden eyes while he sweeps a piece his curly, golden blond hair out of his way. "She's still tired because she was up all night trying to get over how excited she is about being so close to all of this for a month."

I say nothing, refusing to dignify his statement with an answer, as I just look over at him in disgust. After a moment, I look back over at Isabelle and say, "Let me get my shoes on, and I'll help you get moved in." I roll out of bed and look down, making sure that I'm decent. Green pajama pants and a black tank top; that's good enough.

"Don't look so putout, Jacie," Isabelle says, turning to look at her brother. "Not everyone sleeps in lingerie. I do wish that Clary would start embracing her God-given feminine superiority, though."

"Superiority?" Jace demands incredulously. "She's five-foot-nothing!"

"Keep talking, Herondale," I turn around and snap at him, "I can still reach every important bit and piece that you have, and I promise you that's all that matters."

"Whatever," Jace mutters. He frowns at me for a moment before saying,

"What's your hot neighbor's name?"

"You mean Sebastian?" I demand incredulously, taking a startled step backward. "I had no idea that you swungâ€" "

"No!" Jace says quickly holding up his hands as though he is trying to stop the entire insinuation from getting to him while Isabelle busts out laughing, leaning against the doorway as she giggles. "What the hell, Clary? Not only do I not swing that way, but Sebastian is _not_ hot."

Isabelle, who had managed to sober up slightly, completely falls out at Jace's last comment and starts laughing again. "What's going on up here?" Jonathan demands, coming up behind Jace.

"Jace and I were discussing how hot Sebastian Verlac is," I reply almost immediately, smiling innocently. I turn to look at Jace and say, "Do you want me to get his number for you?"

He opens his mouth, as though he is about to say something, but he just shuts it and shakes his head. "I see how you want to start things off, Red," he says.

"I'm glad that you do," I say as I step forward and slide on my sandals. "Come on, Izzy. We can go ahead and get your things ready." I smile up at Jace and say, "We can compare fashion advise later, if you want." I step past him and look at Jon, "Why didn't you tell me this about Jace, Jon?"

My brother's mouth is still hanging open, and I can tell that he is still trying to process everything that he has heard. I don't give him time to get over it with me in the room. I'll leave all of the awkward explanations to Jace.

We quickly go down the stairs and step out into the large living room. Boxes are already piled on to the large fluffy couch that sits against the wall directly to the left of the staircase. I see tiny Max walking through the door with a large bag slung over his shoulder. His glasses are sitting askew on his pale face, which is tinged red with exertion, and his dark hair is matted to his scalp from the sweat. Feeling bad for the nine-year-old, I rush over and grab the bag from him.

I wince slightly as the weight hits me. I almost drop the bag, but stop right before I can manage. "What's in here?" I demand incredulously.

"Manga and anime!" he tells me with an excited smile. "I was thinking that we could have a couple of marathons while I was here of Black Butler or Tokyo Ghoul!"

I look down at him, wondering why he is into such violent subjects at such a young age. I shrug it off after a few moments; both are cool, and the kid was smart enough to appreciate it. "That sounds good," I tell him as I drop the bag on to the recliner that is angled toward the television beside the door. "We can invite Simon over here and we'll all have a party."

Simon Lewis is my best friend. I've known him longer than I've known Isabelle or her stepbrother. He's a dork with large glasses and a

thin and gangly frame. He's a good person, though, and even when he does screw up, his beautiful dark brown eyes always seem to save him. "Did someone say my name?"

I spin around and see Simon himself standing in the doorway with a heavy-looking suitcase in his hand. "What are you doing here?" I demand without really thinking.

"Way to sound please to see me," Simon snaps, his voice nothing more than a wheeze as he sits the suitcase down on the floor next to the doorway and straightens up. He wipes the sweat away from his forehead before he is able to look back at us. "Isabelle told me that your parents had agreed to watch over her and the others while their parents are out of town, so I volunteered to come over and help out."

"Simon, you're such a gentleman," my mother's voice coos. I spin around again, feeling dizzy from how many different surprises were colliding with me at once. I see her standing in the kitchen with a steaming ceramic mug in her hand. I scowl at it, knowing exactly what is in it. Not even caring about anything else, I walk forward like a zombie, suddenly noticing the amazing aroma that was coming from the kitchen. I feel my mouth water slightly, and I knew that I was only a few moments from completely drooling. I see the coffee pot is half full. I snatch a cup out of the drying rack and pour me a cup.

I take a tiny sip, wincing as it burns my tongue. God, it's worth it! I sigh in contentment, not even caring when I hear Jace's voice from the living room again.

"Jeez, Isabelle," I hear him exclaim. "Why do you need this many clothes? Honestly, I don't understand what you're going to do with them all!"

I turn around and see that he is looking down at three suitcases. They are all a soft pink color, the exact same shade as the case that Simon had just lugged in. "On the bright side," Simon says, "That was the last thing in the truck."

"Where are Magnus and Alec?" Isabelle asks no one in particular, completely ignoring Jace's comment about her clothes.

"I sent them to get some pizza," my mother says as I walk to stand next to her. People tell me that we look alike, but I don't really see it. She's tall, with deep red hair, and I am short with bright red hair, though I did inherit her green eyes, but Jonathan did too. My mother is beautiful; I hope that I end up turning out actually looking like her when I am older.

"Sweet," Simon says, breaking through my thought bubble. "I'm half starved!"

"Pizza," I say confusedly, "What pizzeria is open right now?

"All of them," Jonathan tells me slowly, standing next to his friend, their different shades of blond contrasting greatly. "It's like two o'clock in the afternoon."

"She doesn't even know what time it is," Jace sighs, shaking his head dramatically. "I told you that she was up all night thinking about

me. I'm sorry, Mrs. Morgenstern, but I have been known to turn girls' brain to mush."

"More like their stomach to acid," I retort. "I was up all night, because Isabelle wouldn't get off the phone. She was too busy going on aboutâ€"" I caught myself before I let the fact that she had been talking to me about Simon slip. "She was going on about different things." The room fell into an awkward silence after that, and I made no move to disturb it as I took another sip of coffee, thankful for the fact that it was no longer hot enough to scald my tongue. I take a look up after a moment, and see Izzy looking at me with something between betrayal and relief. I give her an apologetic look before I return to my coffee.

"Okay," my mother rubs her hands together as she calls us all up to gather around, "I've decided that we're all going to split up into groups to put everything up in the different rooms. You'll take Max, Jon. Get him settled into the farthest bedroom upstairs. Isabelle, you and Simon take care of Alec and Jace's things. They're staying in the guestroom on the bottom floor. Sorry, Clary, but you're going to have to share with Izzy. You and Jace can go and put her things up in your room."

"I can put her stuff up by myself," I say quickly, already seeing how this is going to turn into a disaster if I did not take control immediately. "Honestly, Jace can help Jon and Max."

"I don't have that much stuff, Clary," Max says, looking at me with wide and innocent eyes. "Izzy is the one that has half of the luggage. You're going to need some help putting everything away." The sad thing is, I can't even get mad at the adorable little kid for trying to help me, even though I desperately want to be angry enough to football kick him a few yards.

"I know that you two don't get along," my mother says to me sternly. "We're all going to be here for over a month. I want the two of you to work together and hopefully work out any differences that you may have. Please don't argue with me. I'd like to get this all done before Alec and Magnus get back with the pizza."

I sigh in resignation and walk over to the couch, shoulder one of Isabelle's four suitcases and swear under my breath at how heavy it is. Not saying another word of protest, I turn back around and stalk up the stairs. The sooner I get this finished, the sooner Jace and I can go our separate ways.

* * *

><p>I walk inside and dump the suitcase on to the bed, and turn around to walk back out. Jace is blocking the way however. He has two of her suitcases, one in each hand. He sits them down on the floor. I expect him to just walk back out to get the other one, or to get away from me. He doesn't however. He reaches behind him and shuts the door.</p>

"We need to talk, Clary," he tells me quietly.

I look into his golden pools, my own eyes narrowed in distrust. "We need to talk about what?" I ask him.

"I think that we should try and at least get along for the sake of the others this summer," Jace informs me. The way that he speaks makes it sound as though he is trying his best to be a mature person handing an immature six-year-old. "Honestly, with our families so close, it would be better if we were able to be at least civil toward each other."

"I'm okay with that," I say after a few moments of debate. "What I want to know is are you going to be able to go through with it? You do understand that being civil is a two-way street, right?"

"Well, maybe if you were able to take a joke, things might be a bit better," Jace says sharply. Apparently he doesn't like being blamed for anythingâ€¦oh well.

"Take a joke?" I demand angrily. "You mean like that hilarious joke where you died my hair green? Or are we talking about the time that you jokingly shredded an art project that I had been working on for months? Let's not forget about that funny incident where you publicly humiliated me and my first boyfriend, Meliorn, causing him to break up with me!"

"Meliorn was a jackass," Jace mutters, looking down at the floor like a properly scolded child. "You looked great with green hair, and the new project that you did after the first one was ruined was a hundred times better!"

I don't reply. I simply look at him with a raised eyebrow, waiting for him to at least own up to what he had done to me in the past.

"Fine," he finally relents. "I might have gone a bit too far provoking you a few times, Clary, okay? I know that you think I'm some horrible person, but I promise you that I'm not that bad of a guy." He takes a step forward and holds his hand out toward me. "What do you say, truce?"

"Of course you would say that you're not a bad guy," I say with a sigh, "Bad people rarely acknowledge that they're bad." He doesn't move his hand. _What the hell? _I question myself. I reach out and grab his hand wearily. Part of me is still looking for the joke that is bound to be behind his movements.

After a few moments of holding his hand and nothing happens, I shake it slowly and let go. Jace smiles at me, though I can still see a wicked glint in his eyes. "Great, Clare. Now that everything's settled, why don't we go and finished getting my sister unpacked?"

* * *

><p>I hope that you liked the second chapter of the fic! Everyone's getting settled in by now, and the peace and serenity will never last, as well all know. Feel free to review with suggestions for what you would like to see in this story. I have a very vague idea of what is going to happen, but I'm definitely up for any good ideas that any of you may have!

"Magnus Bane," my mother says from her spot on the couch. We have already finished distributing everyone's luggage to appropriate parts of the house and are taking a well-deserved break in the living room. Some movie about a bunch of teenagers with black tattoos all over their bodies is playing on the television, but no one is really paying any attention to it.

"Hello, Mrs. Morgenstern," Magnus greets cheerily as I turn around to see him and Alec walking into the house. Like normal, Magnus grabs my attention first. With his dominating presence and loud clothes, it really is hard to look at anything else. Even his eyes, which are shaped to hint at an oriental descent are outlandish with cat-eye contacts. "We're back, and we've brought pizza!"

"How long does it take you to get a few boxes of pizza?" my mother questions them disbelievingly.

"That depends," Magnus says slowly, never losing that winning smile that has been stretched across his face since he walked in. "How long were we gone?"

"An hour and a half," my mother replies, raising an eyebrow, as though she is waiting to hear what type of excuse he has cooked up.

I look over at Alec, who is standing in against the wall with his head ducked down slightly, as though he is hoping that no one will notice him. Most of what I can see is a handful of thick black hair, though I do manage to snag a small view of pink-tinted cheeks on his pale skin. An unconscious smirk starts curling on my lips as I realize exactly what has happened. I turn so that my feet are curled on the couch and I am leaning against the armrest, this way I can better see what is going on. I can't wait to hear what explanation Magnus has concocted to get himself out of this one.

"We had to wait in line for at least twenty minutes," Magnus informed her, placing the back of his hand on his forehead, as though for dramatic effect. "Mrs. Morgenstern, I don't think you know how exhausting that is!"

"Twenty minutes in a line?" my mother asks, rolling her eyes. "I'm sure that it was very traumatizing for you. It's only a twenty-minute drive out there, though; that doesn't explain everything. Where did the other half-hour go?"

"You know that I would never lie to you, right?" Magnus says, looking at my mother with wide and innocent eyes.

"No, Magnus," my mother says, crossing her arms. "I really didn't know that."

"Well, I wouldn't," Magnus informs her solemnly. "What happened was that after Alec and I got the pizza, we were rushing back here, because I figured that you would all be extremely worried about usâ€"

"Not likely," Jace mutters, causing everyone else to snort.

"â€"and I admittedly went a bit over the speed limit in my haste to make it back. We were pulled over by a cop a few minutes into our

perilous journey." Magnus begins to walk toward the kitchen, pizza boxes in hand. "I, like a good citizen, pull over and hand my license over as the large police officer walks up. Officer Wayland asks me why I was goingâ€œhowever many insignificant miles over the speed limit that I was going."

"How many miles over are we talking about, Magnus?" Isabelle chimes in this time, her own eyes narrowed as she crosses her arms over her chest.

"I can't even really remember," Magnus says as he places the boxes on the counter and waves the question away. "It's insignificant. I remember telling you all that a few seconds ago." He shakes his head and says, "Goodness, is it too hard to ask for attentive listeners, Alec?"

Alec murmurs something, though I cannot catch what it was. Judging from the glance that he is giving the eccentric boy, I am guessing that it was something along the lines of _dig your own grave and leave me the hell out of it. I can't even blame him. Magnus has a bad habit of creating outlandish stories and excuses. It is something that everyone expects and never really gets tired of hearing.

"Soooo," Jace says slowly, drawing out the word. "Since when does it take thirty minutes to get a ticket for your insignificant number of miles over the speed limit?"

"It doesn't normally," Magnus says before a wicked smile cut across his mouth, "but, you see, Officer Wayland started _flirting _with me. Who am I to turn down such a nice compliment. He was simply _gorgeous._"

I look behind Magnus slightly and see Alec standing not far behind him with a scowl on his face. It makes me wonder if this extravagant story actually happened. Alec definitely looks putout enough for it to be genuine. Obviously, what I thought had happened hadn't happened at all. Magnus looks behind him at the person in question and says, "Wasn't he gorgeous?"

"I don't know, Magnus," Alec grumbles. "I don't want to talk about it right now."

"What's got you in such a bad mood?" Magnus demands. "You've barely said a word the entire ride back?"

Oh boy, this is going to turn into a complete wreck. Not really wanting to watch this, I turn around and look at the others. Apparently they have the same feeling. My mother stands up from her place next to me and says, "Alright! Let's get some pizza!"

I stand up immediately and so do a few others. The only person that stays seated is Jonathan, who looks as though he is about to be sick. "What's wrong with you?" Jace asks.

"I'm sorry," Jon says, "I can't hear Magnus talk about anyone like that. It's disgusting!"

"Go to hell, Jon," Magnus says. "You're just jealous because police officers don't flirt with _you!"

"Language!" my mother scolds.

"Yeah, Magnus," Jon taunts childishly, "watch your damn language!"

"Jonathan!" my mom spins around to look at him.

Jace and Jon both have collapsed on the couch by this time, however, laughing loudly like idiots.

"Shut up, both of you!" Isabelle snaps. "I want pizza and the longer you sit around giggling like little girls, the longer I have to wait!"

"Don't get mad at them, Isabelle," Magnus tells her, "It's not their fault that they're women trapped in horrible male bodies."

"I will have you know that my body is a work of art," Jace says indignantly standing up and crossing his arms over his chest."

"I love how you don't even deny the fact that Magnus just called you a woman," Simon snickers before apparently becoming bored with the entire thing. He turns away from my brother and Jace and walks to the kitchen, opening the first box of pizza that he comes in contact with.

"Look who's talking, Rat Face," Jace snaps, clearly not as bored as Simon suddenly is. "You're just mad becauseâ€"

"What's going on in here?" my father's voice booms. I jump slightly as I turn and see him standing in the front doorway. He looks tired and slightly disgruntled. His pale skin is slightly flushed and his white blond hair is a mess, as though he has been running his hands through it constantly.

"Magnus, Jace, Simon and Jonathan are arguing over what gender they are, Mr. Morgenstern," Max pipes up through the silence.

Startled, I turn and look at my little buddy, who has just become my favorite of the Lightwood siblings. I turn back around just in time to see the priceless look on my father's face. His nearly black eyes are widened and his mouth is open, as though he is trying to find a way to express just how unready he was to hear Max's statement, but he can't find the words to properly describe it.

Even more silence rang in the room, so awkward that I was surprised that no one just keeled over from it. Finally, my father just steps into the house fully and shuts the door behind him. "Alright," he says, "apparently I forgot to have the gender talk with my son, and all of your parents forgot this as well. Jon, Jace, Simon and Magnus, come with me. I think we all need to speak alone."

Magnus' eyes widened and he said, "I don't know if you're really qualified to give someone like me that kind of talk."

"Bane," my father barks, turning around to look at him, "I said _gender_ talk. That really has nothing to do with your choice of sexuality. Now come on."

Clearly taken aback by my father's words, Magnus just stares at him with wide eyes for a moment before sighing and taking a step forward. "Come on, then," he says, looking over at Jace and Jon, "Let's go, Mr. Work-of-Art, and Rat Face."

"Why don't I have a nickname?" Jon asks, genuinely looking putout with his lower lip jutting forward slightly.

"I don't know, man," Jace says, patting him on the back, "we'll come up with something for you soon."

The four boys shuffled out of the room dejectedly, being led by my father, though not before Simon snagged another piece of pizza. Once they were out of sight, the room descended into another silence, though this one was a lot less awkward. Not even thinking, I walk over to Max and pull him into a bone-crushing hug. "I love you, little guy," I exclaim to him as I pick his gangly frame from the ground and spin him around.

He giggles slightly, and that is all that it takes for the dam around the others to completely break. Everyone started laughing, including Alec, who still looked as though something was bothering him. "Come on," he said, taking a step toward the kitchen. "Let's eat before those guys get back and take all of the food."

"Max gets first slice," declare as I let him down and push him toward the kitchen. "He's the hero right now."

* * *

><p>Yes, Max, you are definitely the hero. Thank you all so much for the reviews. They make me smile. Your insight for what you want to have in this story is definitely being taken into consideration. I have no idea if I am going to be switching POVs for this fic, however. I know I had someone review about that, and I am sorry. You never know, however, I could always change my mind. If I do, you all will be the first to know.

**I hope that you all liked the chapter, and feel free to leave a review on the way out. **

End
file.